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UNCLAS ABUJA 001196

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR: DS/DSS, DS/OP/AF, DS/DSS/ITA AND AF/EX

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ASEC](#) [NI](#)

SUBJECT: CRIMINAL INCIDENT IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO CHANCERY COMPOUND.

[11.](#) (U) Summary: On Friday, May 18, 2001 at approximately 2000 hours an armed car-jacking occurred in close proximity to the Chancery compound. End Summary

[12.](#) (U) The car-jacking occurred in front of the official residence belonging to the Government of Nigeria (GON) Minister of Aviation, located two blocks from the Chancery compound. The vehicle car-jacked, a late model Toyota Land Cruiser sport utility vehicle, belonged to a Nigerian citizen visiting the Minister of Aviation residence. The car-jacking occurred after the driver dropped the owner of the vehicle in front of the Minister residence. The driver remained in the vehicle outside the Minister residence, where he was approached by at least two local male subjects driving a white Peugeot 505 (no further information). The male subjects ordered the driver of the Land Cruiser to drive away from the area at gunpoint, directing him to remote area of Abuja. The male subjects ordered the driver to remove his clothing, before fleeing with the vehicle and the driver clothing

[13.](#) (U) The incident was reported to the police by the owner of the vehicle after he came out of the Minister's residence, and could not locate his vehicle and driver. The driver later provided additional details regarding the incident. The Nigeria Police Force has established a presence on the one street entering the area, consisting of a tent, patrol car and officers.

[14.](#) (U) The incident occurred on the same street as the Chancery, beyond the view of the local guard force, but in an area where Embassy employees park POVs. The section of the street passing in front of the Embassy compound is secured by anti-ram drop-arm barriers. The local guard force personnel reported neither the robber Peugeot 505 nor the stolen Land Cruiser passed through the closed portion of the street. While the local guard force and Nigerian Police presence likely deters criminals from operating right in front of the Embassy, the knowledge of a significant armed police presence about 100 yards away did nothing to deter these criminals in this case.

[15.](#) (U) The RSO has sent all Mission personnel a security advisory regarding the incident. The security posture at the Chancery compound is good, due to the presence of the local guard force and Nigerian Police personnel posted immediately outside the Chancery. During the core working hours, there is also a plainclothes surveillance detection presence working the area around the chancery. During non-working hours the surveillance detection guards are assigned to Post residential compounds.

[16.](#) (U) However, the local guard force presence is inadequate to cover areas beyond the drop arm barrier gates. Many mission employees (including USDH) are forced to park in areas away from the Embassy compound and beyond the line of local guards' sight. The RSO is considering additional local guard force personnel to ensure the security of Mission personnel walking to/from their vehicles.

[17.](#) (U) Direct any questions regarding the above matter to Michael E. Bishop, RSO, U.S. Embassy Abuja, Nigeria at 234-9-523-0960.

Jeter